



The Reflection Homes Association Community Newsletter

October 2022



RHA Board & Committee News:

Upcoming Meetings:

Board	Oct 10
ACC	Oct 3
Recreation	Oct 12
SA	Oct 5

Until further notice, all meetings will be **online** at 7pm & are subject to change.

The RHA website has instructions on attending online meetings.

www.rha-homes.org

Important Dates:

Oct 5	VA Personal Property Tax payments due
Oct 5	Yom Kippur <i>fcps holiday</i>
Oct 10	Indigenous Peoples Day/Columbus Day <i>fcps holiday</i>
Oct 24	Diwali <i>fcps holiday</i>
Oct 31	Halloween
Oct 31	<i>fcps student holiday</i>
Nov 1	All Saints Day
Nov 2	All Souls Day/Dia de Los Muertos
Nov 6	Daylight Saving Time ends
Nov 8	RHA Annual Meeting
Nov 8	Election Day  <i>fcps holiday</i>

RHA Board

President:

Don Nuss

Vice President:

Charlie Marts

Treasurer:

John Hanchulak

Secretary:

Colleen Ward

At Large:

Mike Olson

FirstService Residential (FSR):

703-385-1133

800-927-4599

Board of Directors: by Don Nuss, RHA Board President

A PERSONAL TALE OF WATER WOES. Homes in RHA were built more than 40 years ago and issues with their water service lines are occurring more frequently. I personally had an issue last year with a break in the water service line where it enters our house through the concrete slab. The break caused significant damage in the downstairs living area. Fortunately, our homeowners insurance policy covered replacement of the flooring that was damaged. However, I was responsible for repair of the water service line. After that incident, I signed up for a water line replacement policy offered by HomeServe.

Less than a year later, our repaired water service line developed additional breaks in 2 places—one inside the house and another one in the yard. The break inside the house caused damage to the downstairs living area where we had just replaced the flooring. Our homeowners insurance policy again covered replacement of the damaged flooring. However, because I had signed up for a water line replacement policy, the water line was replaced with no out-of-pocket expense to me. That policy saved me approximately \$3,000.

I am relating this experience just to raise your awareness to the fact that our homes, because of their age and the type of materials used when they were built, are becoming more susceptible to breaks in water service lines and to let you know that coverage for repair or replacement of water lines is available for a minimal cost. Because I had

2022 Annual Meeting is Virtual on Zoom!

November 8, 2022 7:00 pm Sign In 7:30 pm Meeting Starts

(info on RHA-Homes.org, and in FSR mailing to homeowners)

The five members of the RHA Board of Directors each serve terms of three years, which are timed so that there is overlap among the members. Every year at the annual meeting (November 8, 2022 this year) our community elects either one or two new members. This year two board members' terms expire: Mike Olson and Colleen Ward, so we will thank them for their years of service to the community, and proceed to elect their replacements. **All homeowners in good standing are eligible to serve on the board.** Candidate application forms must be received by **October 10** to appear on the proxy form to be mailed to owners and pre-printed on the ballot for the election.

a plan with HomeServe, which is administered by Dominion Energy and NOVEC, I was able to save thousands of dollars. However, there are other companies that offer water line replacement coverage. HomeServe is just the one I have and the one I am most familiar with.



DISCLAIMER: I am not affiliated in any way with HomeServe other than being a customer who pays a monthly fee for water line replacement coverage. I am not advertising for HomeServe. My goal is to make the community aware of the potential benefit of having water line replacement coverage.

Architectural Control Committee:

by Georgette Nuss, ACC Chair

At the last regularly scheduled meeting of the ACC, the Committee approved 2 applications. There was one application for new windows and one application for solar panels. The next meeting will be **MONDAY**, October 3 at 7:00 PM. The Committee normally meets once a month on the first Monday of the month unless there is a holiday. If you wish to submit an application for change, please do so 2-to-3 weeks prior to the meeting so that questions can be cleared up before the meeting.

DID YOU KNOW... If you are considering make a change to your house, you can access a copy of the change application on the RHA website at <https://rha-homes.org/acc-committee>.

(continued on page 2)

ACC (continued from page 1)

DID YOU KNOW...No resident or Owner may store any materials, including but not limited to: construction materials, household appliances, kids toys, wood, tools, trash cans and/or boxes (or any other material besides vegetation), in public view.

DID YOU KNOW...that if your townhome has an alcove, it cannot be used to store items. Not only is that against the RHA Guidelines, but it is also against Fairfax County fire codes. You are risking a fine from RHA and/or a ticket from Fairfax County.

DID YOU KNOW... The next ACC meeting is scheduled for **MONDAY**, October 3, at 7:00 PM, via Zoom. If you are using a computer, use this link, <https://rha-homes.org/>, and scroll down to the paragraph **Architectural Control Committee (ACC) Meeting** to join the meeting with one click. No ID or passcode needed. Just click on the word **HERE**. To join by phone, please call (301) 715-8592. The Meeting ID is 880 5015 0929, and the Passcode is 491674.

Recreation Committee, Inc. (RCI): by Gene Harper, RCI Treasurer
The committee conducted a Zoom meeting on September 14. Seven members were present, along with Sequoia Community Manager Dale Edwards. One community resident also attended the meeting to observe.

Chairperson Lourdes Umana reported on the successful ending

Let's Do Our Part to Protect the Chesapeake Bay!

by Patsy Velin, Street Ambassador Chair

Have you heard? We live in a flood plain. Well, close, but we actually live in a Resource Protection Area (RPA). Yep. Our townhomes and detached homes, which border Loudoun and Fairfax Counties, are part of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance (CBPO). The CBPO was adopted to protect our local streams and one of the world's most productive estuaries, the Chesapeake Bay, from pollution due to land use and development. All of Fairfax County drains into the Potomac River and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. In an effort to protect and improve the quality of these waterways, Ffx Co designated environmentally sensitive areas known as Resource Protection Areas.



Sign on storm drain on Parcher Ave

Resource Protection Areas (RPAs) are regulated corridors of environmentally sensitive land that lie alongside or near the shorelines of streams, rivers and other waterways. In their natural condition, RPAs protect water quality, filter pollutants out of stormwater runoff, reduce the volume of stormwater runoff, prevent erosion and perform other important biological and ecological functions.



Celebrate "Source Water Protection Week" Sept 25-Oct 1

<https://www.fairfaxwater.org>

Some recommendations from **Fairfax Water** on keeping our source of drinking water (the Potomac River) clean:

- Manage/recycle/dispose household hazardous wastes properly (cleaners, paints, vehicle fluids, fertilizers, pesticides, etc.)
- Avoid dumping. Never put anything hazardous down the sink, toilet or storm drain as it can end up in our drinking water.

to the pool season, noting some residents improperly had tried to purchase pool passes at the poolhouse front desk. This prompted comments about the need for better communication between owners and tenants on the proper way to get pool passes. In his presentation on management matters, Edwards agreed with Umana's assessment on the pool season. He also requested the committee to update the rental agreement outlining procedures for residents to rent the poolhouse for private events.

RCI members agreed to review RCI compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance. This statute was adopted by Fairfax County "to protect local streams and one of the world's most productive estuaries, the Chesapeake Bay, from pollution due to land use and development," according to an online county website. (see article below) This coverage includes the community creek and its surrounding common areas, all managed by RCI.

Members also focused on measures to restore and improve lighting in the poolhouse parking area. The committee also discussed progress needed on a request for proposals to upgrade security camera application in the RCI areas of responsibility.

The committee voted to increase quarterly dues from \$85.75 to \$90.89, beginning in January 2023.

The next meeting date is set for October 12. The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 p.m.

Notice any dampness or extra flooding in your area after a heavy rainstorm? It eventually runs into the beautiful creek that flows through our common grounds, it also affects the underground springs & seeps throughout our community. They all connect with Horsepen Creek, which joins Broad Run, which flows into the Potomac River which connects to the Chesapeake Bay. Check out the link www.fairfaxcounty.gov/landdevelopment/chesapeake-bay-preservation-ordinance Then scroll to the interactive RPA Guidance Map and type in your address.

Your Street Ambassadors, the RCI and your RHA Board are concerned about the seasonal excess water in our yards and common grounds. Both the Board and RCI have been coordinating with Fairfax County on mitigation efforts.

We are also aware of a recent building permit request that took 13 weeks because the county wanted to make sure trees were not cut down needlessly and/or not replaced. Why? Those tree roots help suck up that extra water, which is one of the aspects of the preservation ordinance other than protecting the bay from pollution.

If you are concerned also, please contact your Board, the RCI or Street Ambassadors while we learn together about the CBPO, abide by the rules and try to keep our properties beautiful and a bit drier.

- Cleanup after yourself & pets. Pet waste can enter storm drains & spread bacteria.
- Limit use of fertilizers & pesticides. These can wash into drains.
- Participate in volunteer stream cleanups.
- If you see something, say something. Report any spills, illegal dumping or suspicious activity to authorities.

Most Fall Berries only LOOK Edible!

To a child (and some adults!) wild berries look good enough to eat. Only some of them are. Others are poisonous. Some are not actually poisonous but can cause nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and/or skin irritations.

An RHA homeowner (also a nurse) reported that kids were eating Yew berries (*Taxus brevifolia*) and had to go to the emergency room. Given the time of year, when a lot of plants are going to seed, now is a good time for a newsletter article about poisonous berries, and to remind parents to tell their kids not to eat **any** berries, mushrooms, plants, etc, without asking them first.

Learn the names of the plants & berries in your yard & neighborhood, & pay attention to those that are poisonous as well as those that can cause upset stomachs, nausea, vomiting, or be a choking hazard. Post the 24-hour Poison Control Number (1-800-222-1222) prominently, & check out the online tool <https://triage.webpoisoncontrol.org> (reference: National Capital Poison Control website).

Some common berry producing plants/shrubs/trees in our RHA neighborhood:

Yew: A medium sized evergreen with rather soft needles. All parts: stems, needles, roots, are potentially dangerous if consumed. Female shrubs produce red “berries” in the fall that are really a seed inside a fleshy cup. The seed is highly toxic! Head for the emergency room!



Pokeweed: A common red-stemmed plant in our area that produces grape-like clusters of dark purple berries. [AKA “Inkberry”. *Civil War archives have soldier’s letters written in inkberry juice.*] The birds love the berries & spread the seeds widely, which is why you will find this plant growing uninvited in your gardens. The plants have a carrot-like root, & wither to the ground in winter, only to sprout again in the spring. All parts of the mature plant are potentially dangerous. Consuming the fruit can cause nausea, vomiting, cramps, stomach pain, diarrhea that can send you to the emergency room.



Virginia Creeper: A common vine in our area that also produces purple grape-like berries. The berries are very dangerous if consumed, may also cause contact allergic reactions to the lips, mouth, tongue & throat, and will likely send you to the emergency room.



Lily of the Valley: The flowers of this low growing (somewhat invasive) plant have a sweet scent, and produce a small stalk of berries in the fall. All parts of the plant are potentially toxic with cardiac, stomach cramps, & vom-



iting effects, and consuming them will likely send you to the emergency room.

Holly: Grown as a common ornamental shrub, the red berries are potentially harmful to both people & pets if more than a small handful are eaten. Since branches of holly are often brought indoors as decorations, be advised that the berries may fall off & additionally pose a choking hazard to small children, or be eaten by pets.



Beautyberry: These tiny, bright purple berries are definitely **not poisonous**. They aren't the most delicious fruit, and when raw, their flavor is somewhat astringent. However, the berries make a great jam, but you might have to compete with birds to harvest any of them once they turn from green to purple.



Pyracantha: The thorny climbing bush is in the apple family, and the bright orange berries are definitely **not poisonous**. Like green apples, though, they can give you a stomach ache if you eat too many. They can be harvested when ripe & cooked into a jelly much like apple jelly.



Mock Strawberry: This small plant spreads by multiple runners & is a formidable weed in our gardens & lawns (it was originally introduced from SE Asia as an ornamental). It has small yellow flowers throughout the spring, summer & fall, and produces small, round red “strawberries”, that while rather dry & almost tasteless, are definitely **not poisonous**. Birds love the berries & help distribute the seeds.



Flowering Dogwood: This native tree is widely planted for its showy blossoms in the spring, and it produces clusters of small berries that turn red in the fall. Birds love them. While the berries are very astringent & bitter, they are definitely **not poisonous** to us, but are not considered edible.



To repeat the intro: Wild berries look good enough to eat; but only some of them are. Learn which ones are which. Parents tell your kids not to eat ANY without asking you first. Keep the 24-hour Poison Control number handy 1-800-222-1222.

NOTES

Free Donuts!: Save the Date!!! **Saturday morning October 29,** from 9:00 to noon. Free donuts and coffee on the corner of Appgar and Aiken. We'll set up a table for food, neighborly friendship AND valuable information from the Office of Emergency Preparedness. Are you ready for the next outage? Snowed in? Be prepared, but first, come share and enjoy. Hope to see you there! Your RHA Board and Street Ambassadors.



Fire Prevention Week and Open House at all 39 Fairfax County Fire Stations **Oct 15** from 10 am - 4 pm. Visit, tour, talk to firefighters, see the vehicles, & learn about fire safety and prevention. Theme is: "Fire won't wait. Plan your escape."

Waterford Fair! In Historic (f. 1733) Waterford, VA, visit the 78th annual fall festival Oct 7-9, 10am - 5pm. Juried artists, historic home tours, Revolutionary War Reenactments, music, food.

www.waterfordfairva.org

RHA Newsletter submissions: Inputs/comments/suggestions for the November 2022 RHA newsletter are due by October 20. Send inputs to: newsletter@rha-homes.org

TH Common Area Enforcement. The board is diligently working to stop the residents from dumping trash and bulk items on the TH common areas. **Over 80 violations** were identified this month and notices are in the process of being sent to the associated owners. If you live near a common area where dumping is occurring and you are willing to assist the board in identifying those that are dumping, please send an email to board@rha-homes.org. All trash and bulk items must be placed in front of YOUR home. Bulk items must be called in to Haulin Trash at (703) 559-8558.

If you are currently dumping trash and bulk items onto the TH common area, Stop Now -- you do not want to risk losing parking privileges and paying fines.

Virginia's Personal Property Tax payments are due on Oct 5.

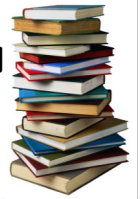
Good Neighbor of the Year: 😊

Candidate nominations for the annual Good Neighbor of the Year Award are requested by October 20th. The person (or persons) selected will be presented with a plaque at the annual meeting on Nov 8.



October 2022

National Book Month



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
25 (September) Gold Star Mothers Day	26 FCPS holiday Rosh Hashana Jewish New Year	27	28	29	30 INTERNATIONAL PODCAST DAY	1 World Vegetarian Day
2 Oktoberfest (Last Day)	3 7:00-9:00 ★ ACC online meeting	4 begins at sundown Yom Kippur	5 7:00-9:00pm ★ SA online meeting FCPS holiday	6 WALK TO SCHOOL DAY	7 Herndon HS Homecoming Weekend	8 Mawlid Un Nabi
9 INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAY (Columbus Day)	10 7:00-9:00pm ★ RHA Board online meeting FCPS holiday	11 Canadian Thanksgiving	12 7:00-9:00pm Recreation ★ online meeting NATIONAL FARMERS DAY	13 World Sight Day	14	15 GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY
16 World Food Day	17 BOSS'S DAY	18 National Pasta Day	19	20	21	22
23	24 Hindu Festival of Lights FCPS holiday diwali	25	26 National Pumpkin Day	27 NATIONAL BLACK CAT DAY	28 FCPS 1st Qtr ends. 2 hour early release National Chocolate Day	29
30	31 FCPS holiday HALLOWEEN	1 (November) All Saints Day	2 Dia de Los Muertos	3	4	5

This newsletter is created by the Board of Directors of Reflection Homes Association in order to inform you about its work, and to keep you updated on things important to our neighborhood. If you have any questions, suggestions, or contributions to this newsletter, please email them to: RHAbord@RHA-Homes.org and/or newsletter@RHA-Homes.org Visit: <http://rha-homes.org> to read past newsletters, or to request email newsletter delivery.